

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listing, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A method for conditioning semiconductor wafers and/or hybrids comprising:

preparing a space which is essentially enclosed by a container and has a wafer/hybrid chuck which is located therein and has the purpose of holding a semiconductor wafer and/or hybrid applied to the wafer/hybrid chuck;

pre-cooling a dry fluid in a single heat exchanger outside the space;

conducting the pre-cooled fluid out of the single heat exchanger into the wafer/hybrid chuck via a first line, and then through the wafer/hybrid chuck to cool the wafer/hybrid chuck;

conducting at least a portion of the fluid having been conducted through the wafer/hybrid chuck back to the single heat exchanger via a second line out of the wafer/hybrid chuck to the single heat exchanger; and

heating the portion, by using a residual coldness of the portion to cool the single heat exchanger to contribute to the pre-cooling of the fluid in the single heat exchanger,[[;]]

wherein the heated portion is conducted via a third line from the single heat exchanger into the space, before being allowed to flow out within the space to condition the atmosphere in the space, and

wherein the same single heat exchanger both:

pre-cools and conducts the fluid to the wafer/hybrid chuck, and

receives back the fluid from the wafer/hybrid chuck to contribute to the pre-cooling of the fluid.

2. (Cancelled).

3. (Previously presented) The method according to Claim 1, wherein the portion is firstly heat-treated and then allowed to flow out within the space.

4. (Previously presented) The method according to Claim 1, wherein the portion is heat-treated outside the space and then fed back to the space.

5. (Previously presented) The method according to Claim 1, wherein the portion is allowed to flow out within the space directly after it leaves the wafer/hybrid chuck.

6. (Currently amended) A method for conditioning semiconductor wafers and/or hybrids, comprising:

preparing a space which is essentially enclosed by a container and has a wafer/hybrid chuck which is located therein and has the purpose of holding a semiconductor wafer and/or hybrid applied to the wafer/hybrid chuck;

pre-cooling a dry fluid in a single heat exchanger outside the space;

conducting the pre-cooled fluid out of the single heat exchanger into the wafer/hybrid chuck via a first line, and then through the wafer/hybrid chuck to cool the wafer/hybrid chuck;

wherein at least a portion of the fluid having been conducted through the wafer/hybrid chuck is used to condition the atmosphere within the space;

wherein a first portion of the fluid having been conducted through the wafer/hybrid chuck is firstly conducted via a second line out of the wafer/hybrid chuck back to the single heat exchanger, then heated by using a residual coldness of the first portion to cool the single heat exchanger to contribute to the pre-cooling of the fluid in the single heat exchanger, and then conducted via a third line from the single heat exchanger into the space, before being allowed to flow out within the space, and

wherein a second portion having been conducted through the wafer/hybrid chuck is allowed to flow out within the space directly after it leaves the wafer/hybrid chuck, and

wherein the same single heat exchanger both:

pre-cools and conducts the fluid to the wafer/hybrid chuck, and receives back the fluid from the wafer/hybrid chuck to contribute to the pre-cooling of the fluid.

7. (Previously presented) The method according to Claim 6, wherein at least one of the first and second portions can be regulated in terms of flow rate.

8. (Previously presented) The method according to Claim 3, wherein the portion is heat-treated in that it is used for precooling the fluid, outside the space before said portion is allowed to flow out within the space.

9. (Withdrawn) A device for conditioning semiconductor wafers and/or hybrids having:

space being at least partially enclosed by a container and having a wafer/hybrid holding device which is located therein and has the purpose of holding a semiconductor wafer and/or hybrid;

a first line via which the fluid can be conducted into the container and into the wafer/hybrid holding device from outside the space;

a second line via which the fluid can be conducted from the wafer/hybrid holding device to outside the space; and

a third line via which at least a portion of the fluid can be fed back from outside the space into the space for conditioning the atmosphere within the space.

10. (Withdrawn) The device according to Claim 9, characterized in that the line device has:

wherein a temperature regulating device is provided between the second and third lines.

11. (Withdrawn) The device according to Claim 10, characterized in that outflow elements are provided at the end of the third line.

12. (Withdrawn) The device according to Claim 9, further comprising a fourth line via which the fluid can be conducted from the wafer/hybrid holding device into the space.

13. (Cancelled)

14. (Withdrawn) The device according to Claim 12, characterized in that a valve is provided for regulating the flow rate of the fourth line.

15. (Withdrawn) The device according to Claim 10, characterized in that the temperature regulating device has a heating device.

16. (Withdrawn) The device according to Claim 10, characterized in that the temperature regulating device has a heat exchanger to which at least a portion of the fluid leaving the space can be conducted.

17. (Withdrawn) The device according to Claim 16, characterized in that the heat exchanger is used to precool the fed-in fluid.

18. (Withdrawn) The device according to Claim 16, wherein the portion leaving the heat exchanger can be fed back at least partially into the space in order to condition the atmosphere.

19. (Withdrawn) The device according to Claims 9, characterized in that a further line is provided via which dry fluid can additionally be conducted directly into the space from outside the space.

20. (Cancelled).

21. (Withdrawn) A method for conditioning semiconductor wafers and/or hybrids having the steps:

preparing a space which is at least partially enclosed and has a wafer/hybrid holding device which is located therein and has the purpose of holding a semiconductor wafer and/or hybrid;

conducting a dry fluid into the space and through the wafer/hybrid holding device in order to heat-treat the wafer/hybrid holding device;

conducting said fluid from the wafer/hybrid holding device to outside the space; wherein at least a portion of the fluid which has been conducted from the wafer/hybrid holding device to outside the space is used to condition the atmosphere within the space by being conducted back into the space.

22. (Previously presented) The method according to Claim 1, wherein the pre-cooled fluid, when conducted through the wafer/hybrid chuck in order to cool the wafer/hybrid chuck, crosses the wafer/hybrid chuck in a cooling coil or cooling pipe.

23. (Previously presented) The method according to Claim 6, wherein the pre-cooled fluid, when conducted through the wafer/hybrid chuck in order to cool the wafer/hybrid chuck, crosses the wafer/hybrid chuck in a cooling coil or cooling pipe.